

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Applicants respectfully request consideration of the present application in view of the amendments above and the following remarks, which are responsive to the Office Action mailed May 26, 2006. Following such changes, Claims 2-5, 8, 10-12, 16-27, 29-30, 32-33, and 35-36 remain pending in the application. Claims 1, 6-7, 9, 13-15, 28, 31, and 34 have been canceled.

In the Office Action, Claims 2-5, 8, 10-12, 16-27, 29, 30, 32, 35, and 36 were noted as pending in the application. Claims 2-5, 8, 11, 12, 19-21, 25, 27, and 32-36 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious in light of U.S. Patent No. 6,594,641 to Southam (“Southam”) in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,958,280 to Pauly (“Pauly”) and U.S. Patent No. 6,263,317 to Sharp (“Sharp”). In addition, Claims 16-18 were rejected under §103(a) as being obvious in light of *Southam* in view of *Pauly*, as applied to Claim 34, 15, 25, and 28, and further in view of U.S. Published Application No. 2002/0032668 to Kohler (“Kohler”). Furthermore, Claims 10, 22-24, 29, and 30 were rejected under §103(a) being obvious in light of *Southam* in view of *Pauly* and *Sharp*, as applied to Claim 8, and further in view of *Kohler*. The rejections are addressed separately below.

Applicants have amended independent Claims 2, 8, 16, 19, 22, 25, and 29 and dependent Claims 3-4, 10-11, 17-18, 20-21, 30, 32-33, and 35-36. In light of these amendments, which are discussed in detail below, Applicants respectfully assert that *Southam*, *Pauly*, *Sharp*, and *Kohler*, individually or in combination, do not teach or suggest all of the elements of independent Claims 2, 8, 16, 19, 22, 25, and 29. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the rejection of independent Claims 2, 8, 19, 22, 25, and 29 and dependent Claims 3-4, 10-11, 17-18, 20-21, 23-24, 26-27, 30, 32-33, and 35-36.

Independent Claim 2

Amended independent Claim 2 recites a method for product order processing that includes the steps of (1) generating a shipping label by the communications device in response to determining that the order fulfillment status indicates the product order has been partially or fully

fulfilled and (2) providing the supplier access to the generated shipping label to allow the supplier to print the shipping label. Applicants respectfully assert that *Southam, Sharp, Pauly*, and *Kohler* fail to disclose these steps. In particular, *Pauly* discloses that a “match of the packing slip bar code and the individual packs’ bar codes will result in a shipping label” (see *Pauly*, column 14, lines 41-43), but *Pauly* does not disclose a communications device that generates the shipping label and provides a supplier access to the generated shipping label to allow the supplier to print the shipping label. Furthermore, *Sharp* discloses generating “an airbill, packing slip and other shipment information … by a server computer,” but this step is performed prior to order fulfillment. See *Sharp*, column 4, lines 36-39. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of amended Claim 2 be withdrawn.

Independent Claims 8, 16, 19, 22, 25, and 29

Amended Claim 8 recites a method for product order processing that includes the steps of (1) generating a shipping label in response to receiving an order fulfillment status indicating that the product order has been partially or fully fulfilled and (2) providing the generated shipping label to a communications device associated with each identified supplier to allow the shipping label to be printed. Amended Claim 16 recites an order entry and visibility system that includes a second communications device that (1) generates a completed shipping label for at least a portion of the product order in response to receiving order processing status information and (2) provides the supplier with access to the generated completed shipping label to allow the supplier to print the generated completed shipping label. Amended Claim 19 recites a computer readable medium that stores an order processing and visibility application that is configured to (1) generate a completed shipping label for at least a portion of the product order in response to receiving order status information indicating that at least a portion of the product order has been partially or fully fulfilled and (2) provide the generated shipping label to the networked supplier for printing. Amended Claim 22 recites (1) a means for generating a completed shipping label for the product order by the network application in response to receiving order fulfillment status information from the supplier indicating that at least a portion of the product order has been partially or fully fulfilled and (2) a means for enabling the supplier to access the network

application for the purpose of accessing and printing the generated completed shipping label. Amended Claim 25 recites a program of instructions comprising the steps of (1) generating a completed product order shipping label in response to receiving order fulfillment status information indicating that at least a portion of the product order has been partially or fully fulfilled and (2) providing access to the completed product order shipping label to the second communications device, wherein the access allows the second communications device to print the completed product order shipping label. Amended Claim 29 recites (1) a computer-readable program means for generating a completed product order shipping label in response to receiving order fulfillment status information indicating that at least a portion of the product order has been partially or fully fulfilled and (2) computer-readable program means for providing access to the completed product order shipping label to allow the second communications device to print the shipping label. Because *Southam, Pauly, Sharp*, and/or the *Kohler* application, individually or in combination, fail to disclose or suggest each of the respective elements of independent Claims 8, 16, 19, 22, 25, and 29, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of these claims be withdrawn.

Dependent Claims 3-5, 10-12, 20-21, 23-24, 26-27, 30, 32-33, and 35-36

In addition, Claims 3-5 and 32-33 depend from Claim 2 and include all of the limitations of Claim 2 plus additional limitations that are not disclosed in the prior art; Claims 11-12 and 35-36 depend from Claim 8 and include all of the limitations of Claim 8 plus additional limitations that are not disclosed in the prior art; Claims 17-18 depend from Claim 16 and include all of the limitations of Claim 16 plus additional limitations that are not disclosed in the prior art; Claims 20-21 depend from Claim 19 and include all of the limitations of Claim 19 plus additional limitations that are not disclosed in the prior art; Claim 27 depends from Claim 25 and includes all of the limitations of Claim 25 plus additional limitations that are not disclosed in the prior art; and Claim 30 depends from Claim 29 and includes all of the limitations of Claim 29 plus additional limitations that are not disclosed in the prior art. Accordingly, because independent Claims 2, 8, 16, 19, 22, 25, and 29 are patentably distinguishable over the prior art cited for the reasons stated above, dependent Claims 3-5, 10-12, 17-18, 20-21, 23-24, 26-27, 30, 32-33, and

Appl. No.: 09/902,361
Amdt. dated September 26, 2006
Reply to Office Action of May 26, 2006

35-36 are also patentably distinguishable over the prior art cited.

It is not believed that extensions of time or fees for net addition of claims are required, beyond those that may otherwise be provided for in documents accompanying this paper. However, in the event that additional extensions of time are necessary to allow consideration of this paper, such extensions are hereby petitioned under 37 CFR § 1.136(a), and any fee required therefore (including fees for net addition of claims) is hereby authorized to be charged to Deposit Account No. 16-0605.

Applicants appreciate the Examiner's careful consideration of this application and would welcome a telephone conference with the Examiner to expedite the processing of the patent application. Applicants' attorney, Meredith Struby, may be reached directly at (404) 881-4626.

Respectfully submitted,

Meredith Struby
Meredith W. Struby
Registration No. 54,474

Customer No. 00826
ALSTON & BIRD LLP
Bank of America Plaza
101 South Tryon Street, Suite 4000
Charlotte, NC 28280-4000
Tel Atlanta Office (404) 881-7000
Fax Atlanta Office (404) 881-7777

ELECTRONICALLY FILED USING THE EFS-WEB ELECTRONIC FILING SYSTEM OF THE UNITED STATES PATENT & TRADEMARK OFFICE ON September 26, 2006.